

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A pattern inspection apparatus inspects fine patterns such as semiconductors (LSI), liquid crystal panels, and masks (reticles) for those. The pattern inspection  
5 apparatus includes a storage device for storing said reference pattern, an image generator for scanning the pattern to-be-inspected with a charged particle beam to produce an image of the pattern to-be-inspected, an input  
10 device for inputting the image of the pattern to-be-inspected, an inspection device for inspecting the pattern to-be-inspected by comparing an edge of the inputted image of the pattern to-be-inspected and an edge of the stored reference pattern with each other, and an output device for  
15 outputting a result of the inspection of the pattern to-be-inspected.